Alberta Finance
Economic Bulletin

Economic Statistics Released During the Week of January 6, 2003 to January 10, 2003

	Reference Period	Month/Previous Month (m/m)	Month/Previous Year's Month (y/y)	Comments
Housing Starts (Thousands)	December			Canadian housing starts were at 198,500 in December, down 6.8% from November. Prince Edward Island had the greatest monthly increase (50.0%), followed by Nova Scotia (41.2%). Decreases occurred in six provinces, with New Brunswick (-31.4%) and Manitoba (-11.8%) experiencing the largest declines. Alberta housing starts were down 7.7% from the previous month, but still 21.5% above their level of December 2001.
Alberta	38,500	-7.7%	21.5%	
Canada	198,500	-6.8%	14.0%	
Rigs Drilling	December			The number of active rigs drilling in Alberta increased by 34.9% in December, the second consecutive monthly increase. On a year over year basis, drilling was up 23.1% from December 2001. The 325 rigs drilling in December was the highest number since February 2002.
Alberta	325	34.9%	23.1%	
Help-Wanted Index (1996 = 100)	December			Alberta's Help-Wanted Index declined to 123.3 in December, down 1.4% from November. Canada's Index fell to 113.5, a drop of 4.0% from the previous month. Nine of the ten provinces experienced monthly declines, with the largest decreases recorded in Newfoundland (-4.1%), Quebec (-3.3%) and Ontario (-3.1%). New Brunswick was the only province with an increase, up 3.7% from November.
Alberta	123.3	-1.4%	-13.5%	
Canada	113.5	-4.0%	-10.5%	
Building Permits ($ Millions)	November			In November, Alberta building permits were up 0.6% from the previous month, due mainly to a 26.7% increase in non-residential permits. Residential permits were down by 8.2%. For Canada, residential permits were down 7.8% from October, while non-residential permits were up by 6.3%, with total permits declining by 2.7%. Over the first ten months of 2002, Canadian building permits were up by 17.0% compared to the same period the previous year, while permits in Alberta were up by 18%.
Alberta	569.4	0.6%	-11.4%	
Canada	3959.9	-2.7%	14.0%	